Foreign and Commonwealth Office
London SW1A 2AH

Telephone 01-

Mr Salem Azzam
Secretary General
Islamic Council
16 Grosvenor Crescent
LONDON SW1 7EP

Your reference

Our reference

Date 11 May 1987

Dear Mr. Azzam,

I have been asked to reply to your letter of 14 April addressed to the Prime Minister.

The Government are concerned about violations of human rights wherever they occur. Our Embassy in Tunis has confirmed reports of recent arrests in Tunisia but have also reported that many of those detained have subsequently been released. Details of the charges have still to be published for those remaining in custody.

We shall continue to follow the situation carefully. The Tunisian Government are well aware of the importance which we attach to respect for human rights.

Yours sincerely,

D Thomson

D Thomson
Near East and North Africa
Department

cc El Mukhi 20/5/87

المجلس الاسلامي
Islamic Council

14 April 1987

The Rt Hon Mrs Margaret Thatcher
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London SW1

Dear Prime Minister,

As a leader of international standing and an active advocate of human rights, I seek your intervention to stop and prevent the persecution of leaders and workers of the opposition in Tunisia.

According to reliable reports, the Tunisian authorities have arrested a number (we have a list of 47 names, and the arrests are continuing) of prominent people and are poised to inflict Draconian punishments on them, including capital punishment. To the best of our belief, the persons arrested, and those under order of arrest, are victims of political vendetta and have not committed any criminal offence.

Madam Prime Minister, you have stood up and campaigned against milder forms of human rights violations than we are witnessing today in Tunisia, especially during your recent visit to the Soviet Union. I am confident that you will also defend the rights of the victims in Tunisia and act before it is too late for those threatened with execution.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

Salem Azzam

Salem Azzam
Secretary General

16 Grosvenor Crescent London SW1 7EP Telephone 01-235 9832 Telex 894240 Islami G Cables ISLAMIAH